



MEMA WEST
Agawam Regional Office

EM Holiday Edition 2025 NEWSLETTER

for the Emergency Managers, Public Safety Partners,
and Communities
of Central and Western Massachusetts



KEEP WARM, KEEP SAFE!

Every winter, there is an uptick in the number of fires in homes and apartments that result in loss of property and loss of too many lives. Faulty/malfunctioning central heating systems, space heaters too close to flammables or plugged into extension cords, or using alternative heat sources that are unsafe (ovens, stoves, clothes dryers, etc.) are the leading causes of fires that may have been prevented.

The Massachusetts Department of Fire Services (DFS) has some public safety messaging resources that can help you get the word out to your community. Prepared content that can be distributed as mailers or brochures to hand out is available. Material is also ready-to-go for dropping content and graphics into your social media posts.



This content is available free of charge and can be used as-is or you can tailor material for your community. Home heating and various holiday safety-related content topics can be found at the [DFS Keep Warm Keep Safe webpage](#)

Any assistance you can provide in getting these messages out to your community just might save a life!

HOLIDAY PREPAREDNESS

MEMA's Preparedness Toolkit has some great information that is ready to go into your community's social media messaging, newsletters and communications. Winter preparedness messages with links to supporting resources and graphics for all seasons are available for you to customize for your community as needed.

Holiday Preparedness PRO Tip*: Can anyone every be fully prepared for auntie's holiday fruit cake? If you are having a hard time thinking of what to do with it... Many fruit cakes to have been found to have a density similar to that of a fully-packed sandbag. Flood season is just around the corner. Just sayin'!

*Note: Fruit cakes cannot really be used for flood protection. **Happy Holidays!!!**

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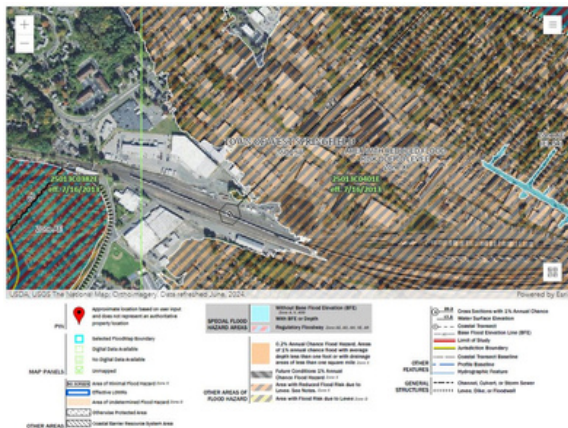
BUSINESS CONTINUITY AND SUPPORT

As we move into the winter months, let's also turn our attention to our local businesses. Every town has some type of business whether it is a brick and mortar storefront or home-based. Historically, when a business is negatively affected by a disaster, **40% of those affected never reopen**. This can be a detriment to not only the business, but to your local economy.

So, what can you do? Speak with your local Chambers of Commerce, business associations, major/minor employers, etc. and emphasize the need to prepare. Businesses that are prepared for service or supply chain disruptions, destruction of property, impacts to employees, etc. are more resilient and likely to be part of that 60% that recovers from a disaster.

A great website to promote is www.ready.gov/business as it has tools specifically designed for businesses of all sizes to be better prepared for disaster. Following a disaster that has impacted at least 5 businesses, SBA assistance may be available through programs such as Economic Injury Disaster Loans. For questions or assistance, please reach out to your Local Coordinator, or MEMA's Survivor Assistance Coordinator, Jamie Barry.

SITUATIONAL AWARENESS



Situational awareness in preparedness planning includes assessing risks to potential hazards, such as flood.

FEMA has an interactive map tool that allows you to enter an address, place name, or LAT/LONG coordinates to search if the location is situated in a flood zone.*

Go to the [FEMA Flood Map Service Center: Search By Address](https://www.fema.gov/flood-map-service-center) tool to find where flood zones are relative to locations of interest.

Encourage residents and businesses in your community to look up where flood zones are and make plans for flood impacts. Especially if located near or within identified flood zones.

TRAINING

The Northeast Emergency Management Training & Education Center (**NEMTEC**) has recently migrated all training courses to a new learning management system called Moodle. All users who had registered accounts on the previous platform (TRS) should have received an email from the new system with instructions on activation of your account. Your course records and certificates migrated over to the new system.

Information about the NEMTEC Moodle Learning Management System roll-out, FAQs, links to tutorials are available here on Mass.gov.

If you an email to activate your account on the Moodle system, need assistance with accessing your account, or finding your records, reach out to **Jonathan Miller** at **508-975-3959** or jonathan.miller@mass.gov

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